

VZCZCXRO0334  
PP RUEHFK RUEHKSO RUEHNAG RUEHNH  
DE RUEHKO #4542/01 2710121  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 280121Z SEP 07  
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8007  
INFO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEAWJA/USDOJ WASHDC PRIORITY  
RULSDMK/USDOT WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J5//  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI  
RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA//  
RHMFIUU/USFJ //J5/JO21//  
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA  
RUAYJAA/CTF 72  
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 5799  
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 3386  
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 7042  
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 2329  
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 4113  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9192  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 5249  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 6126

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 13 TOKYO 004542

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR E, P, EB, EAP/J, EAP/P, EAP/PD, PA;  
WHITE HOUSE/NSC/NEC; JUSTICE FOR STU CHEMTOB IN ANTI-TRUST DIVISION;  
TREASURY/OASIA/IMI/JAPAN; DEPT PASS USTR/PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;  
SECDEF FOR JCS-J-5/JAPAN,  
DASD/ISA/EAPR/JAPAN; DEPT PASS ELECTRONICALLY TO USDA  
FAS/ITP FOR SCHROETER; PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR;  
CINCPAC FLT/PA/ COMNAVFORJAPAN/PA.

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [ECON](#) [ELAB](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 09/28/07

Index:

- 1) Top headlines
- 2) Editorials
- 3) Prime Minister's daily schedule

Burmese revolt:

- 4) Secretary Rice, Foreign Minister Komura in basic agreement on Burma, sharply criticize military junta's acts
- 5) Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura protests killing of Japanese reporter during mayhem in Burma
- 6) Japanese government remains cautious about imposing sanctions on Burma

Six-party talks on North Korea:

- 7) Assistant Secretary Hill states that basic agreement with DPRK over disabling nuclear facility has been reached; North Korea seems warmer toward Japan
- 8) Japan very cautious as it enters new "dialogue" phase in negotiations with North Korea

- 9) China's President Hu planning visit to Japan next Spring; China invites Prime Minister Fukuda to come visit, too

Anti-terror law:

- 10) Ambassadors of 11 countries including US meet at Pakistan's embassy to issue statement of appreciation for MSDF refueling services in Indian Ocean
- 11) Outline of new bill extending MSDF refueling to be presented to

Diet next month

12) Defense Minister Ishiba up beat about passing the new anti-terror law this Diet session

13) Defense Ministry to investigate whether MSDF oil supplied to US warships in Indian Ocean was diverted

14) Possible diversion of MSDF oil supplied to US warships in Indian Ocean having been used in Iraq war could become complex bilateral issue

15) In meeting with Secretary Rice, Foreign Minister Komura asks for full information disclosure on use of oil supplied by MSDF in Indian Ocean

16) Former Prime Minister Abe briefly returns home from the hospital

Political scene:

17) Mainichi poll: 74 PERCENT see Diet dissolution and a snap election in a year

18) Prime minister to give Diet policy speech on Oct. 1

19) DPJ planning strategy of flooding the Diet with bills to tie up deliberations

20) Former US Ambassador to Japan Mondale meets with Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Ozawa

Articles:

1) TOP HEADLINES

Asahi, Mainichi, Yomiuri, Sankei & Tokyo Shimbun:  
Japanese journalist shot dead in Burma; Security forces indiscriminately fire at demonstrators

TOKYO 00004542 002 OF 013

Nikkei:

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries wins China order for nuclear plant equipment

Akahata:

Big companies earn 1.75 times more than in bubble economy years

2) EDITORIALS

Asahi:

(1) Prime Minister Fukuda needs to express views to world

(2) Japan urged to work out specific plans to protect environment

Mainichi:

(1) China must join international pressure on Burmese military to end crackdown

(2) Death of 17-year-old sumo wrestler after being struck with beer bottle

Yomiuri:

(1) Give priority to academic ability in drawing up Education Ministry guidelines

(2) Use international pressure on Burma

Nikkei:

(1) Fukuda should pursue 21st-century-version, omni-directional foreign policy

(2) Carry through NHK reform

Sankei:

(1) Now is time to promote democracy in Burma

(2) Death of young wrestler: Sumo association's governance being questioned

Tokyo Shimbun:

(1) Use international pressure to stop bloodshed in Burma

(2) Japan must be more eager to lead international trend to combat global warming

Akahata:

(1) MSDF refueling US warships: Unlawful act apparent

3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, September 27

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Slightly abridged)  
September 28, 2007

09:01

Attended a special cabinet meeting at Kantei. Later, met with Defense Minister Ishiba and after him, met with Education Minister Tokai.

09:48

Attended a session of administrative vice ministers. Afterwards, met with Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Matoba.

10:29

Made a private representation to the Emperor at Imperial Palace, and afterwards attended an attestation ceremony for senior vice ministers.

TOKYO 00004542 003 OF 013

12:55

Had a photo session with senior vice ministers at Kantei. Later, attended a meeting of senior vice ministers.

13:49

Issued letters of appointment to parliamentary secretaries and had a photo session with them. Afterwards, attended a meeting of parliamentary secretaries.

14:18

Met with LDP Headquarters for Party Reform Implementation Chairman Takebe.

15:37

Met with Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura.

17:54

Had dental treatment at dental clinic in Minami Aoyama.

19:07

Arrived at his private residence in Nozawa.

4) Japanese and US foreign ministers agree to condemn Burma (Myanmar)

ASAHI (Page 1) (Full)  
September 28, 2007

Yoshiyuki Komurata, Washington

Visiting Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura on the morning of Sept. 27 (late at night of that day, Japan time) met with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice at the State Department. They agreed to condemn the military junta of Burma, sharing the perception that "It is outrageous to use force on people who were demonstrating in a peaceful manner. Such an act is never permissible in the international community." This was revealed by Komura to Japanese reporters after the meeting.

According to a briefing from the Japanese side, Komura referred to the information about the death of a Japanese photo journalist and told Rice: "Japan will file a strong protest with Myanmar."

5) Chief cabinet secretary lodges protest against death of Japanese

SANKEI (Page 3) (Full)  
September 28, 2007

Hearing it had been confirmed that a Japanese national was killed in Burma (Myanmar), Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura told reporters in Tokyo: "The Japanese government had called on (the government of Burma) not to take a violent crackdown, and now, a

Japanese national has been caught up in it. This is extremely regrettable. We will lodge a protest with Myanmar's government and urge it to clarify what actually happened. We hope it will take appropriate measures for the safety of Japanese nationals."

Machimura stressed: "We again strongly urge the government of Myanmar to swiftly change its oppressive attitude and open a dialogue with the people to resolve the situation." Speaking of whether to impose sanctions on Burma, Machimura went no further to

TOKYO 00004542 004 OF 013

say: "We'd like to wait and see the results of debate to be held at the United Nations Security Council."

Yesterday evening ahead of these press remarks by Machimura, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda told reporters at the Prime Minister's Official Residence: "Regrettable events are taking place. We must think what would be the best way to resolve the situation."

In response to the tense situation involving antigovernment demonstrators in Burma, the Foreign Ministry yesterday raised the security level on travel to Burma from "consider whether to visit the country" to "it is advisable to postpone traveling the country."

6) Japanese killed in Burma (Myanmar); Government wants the turmoil to be resolved through dialogue

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)  
September 28, 2007

A Japanese journalist, Kenji Nagai, covering the tumultuous situation in Burma, was shot to death yesterday by a stray bullet in Rangoon (Yangon). As a result, the Japanese government yesterday decided to send Deputy Foreign Minister Mitoji Yabunaka of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) to Burma and urge the military junta in charge to end its violent crackdown on antigovernment demonstrators and resolve the situation through dialogue. Earlier in the day, MOFA raised the security level in Burma from "need to consider whether or not to visit the country" to "need to postpone visiting the country."

Late yesterday, Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura told reporters: "We have urged (the Burmese government) not to oppress its (people), but the violent crackdown has continued. It is highly deplorable that a Japanese national was caught up in the situation and lost his life. We will file a strong protest (with the Burmese government) and again strongly urge it to resolve the situation through dialogue with the people."

Senior Vice Foreign Minister Hitoshi Kimura late yesterday summoned Burmese Ambassador to Japan Hla Myint to the ministry and demanded that his government deal with the situation properly. The first report on the incident came amid the meeting between Kimura and Hla Myint. The ambassador explained to Kimura: "We put down the revolt out of necessity but keeping it at a minimum level."

Whereas the United States and the European Union (EU) have sought to impose economic sanctions on Burma, the Japanese government remains cautious about immediate sanctions. A senior MOFA official stressed: "It would be more practical to urge the junta to resolve the situation peacefully and promote the democratic process than to impose sanctions and thereby create more poverty in society"

Japan is Burma's largest aid donor, according to the statistics released in (2004) by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee. But Japan has drastically cut down its aid to Burma since the military junta was established in 1988. "The real largest aid donor is China, (which is not an OECD member)," Machimura noted.

7) Six-party talks: Hill -- Basic agreement reached on disablement measures; Joint statement may be presented today; North positive about improving relations with Japan

TOKYO 00004542 005 OF 013

Kiyoshi Nakamura, Beijing

The six-party talks aimed at resolving the North Korean nuclear standoff began on the evening of Sept. 27 at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing. The focus is whether they can adopt before this round ends on Sept. 30 an agreement that includes a road map for implementing the second phase of the process leading to nuclear dismantlement. US Assistant Secretary of State and chief US delegate to the six-party talks Christopher Hill told the press after the first day's meeting that a draft agreement might be presented on Sept. 28, saying, "Basically, we agreed on measures for disablement of the nuclear facilities."

About disablement of the nuclear facilities, Hill also explained that additional questions were presented and that the members would finalize the details tomorrow. According to a South Korean source, there still remain gaps in views between North Korea and other countries over disablement. The talks are likely to face rough going even after a draft is presented.

Yesterday, a plenary session was held for the first time since March that ended in about one and a half hours. Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei, who chairs the six-party talks, said at the outset of the meeting: "This session is vital in the course of the six party talks and its main mission is to map out an action plan for the next phase." This was followed by reports by the chairs of the five working groups on what was discussed in August and September.

According to a Japanese source, Japanese chief delegate and Foreign Ministry Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau chief Kenichiro Sasae briefed on what was discussed by the Japan-North Korea working group. Following this, North Korean chief negotiator Kim Gye Gwan indicated that his country would like to improve relations with Japan in line with the spirits of the Pyongyang Declaration and joint statement.

According to a Foreign Ministry source, the North Korean delegate has rarely made a positive statement during the six-party talks. Japan is expected to confirm changes in North Korea's stance toward the abduction issue and other matters.

8) North Korea exhibits positive stance about improving relations with Japan possibly with dialogue in mind; Japan to ascertain Pyongyang's true intention carefully

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Abridged slightly)  
September 28, 2007

The six-party talks began yesterday in Beijing, providing a venue for the Japanese government to deal with North Korea for the first time since the Fukuda administration was launched. In yesterday's session, North Korea emphasized its willingness to "make efforts" for improving relations with Japan, including the abduction issue. The positive statement apparently comes from Pyongyang's keen awareness of Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda's eagerness to have a dialogue with North Korea. The Japanese government is trying to ascertain the North's true intention.

TOKYO 00004542 006 OF 013

Despite the North Korean delegate's positive statement, Japanese chief negotiator and Foreign Ministry Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau chief Kenichiro Sasae told reporters after the session that the meeting was conducted calmly.

Before the meeting, Sasae said: "It is important to listen closely to what the other side has to say and to clearly state what we have to say so that matters can move forward." This clearly reflected the wishes of Prime Minister Fukuda, who puts high priority on a dialogue with North Korea.

In the meeting yesterday, North Korea seems to have given in to Japan's urging, as planned. But Japan intends to make a decision carefully, with Sasae saying, "It's a bit too early to predict the result at this point."

Through the six-party talks, the government eyes setting a concrete date for the next working-group normalization meeting with North Korea. A decision will be made based on whether the North will take specific steps regarding critical matters, such as resuming the investigations into the fates of the Japanese abductees in compliance with Japan's request.

In the wake of the establishment of the dialogue-oriented Fukuda administration, North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan's statement is seemingly intended to press Tokyo toward reconciliatory policy away from the hard-line policy taken under the previous Abe administration.

Through the media, Pyongyang repeatedly harshly criticized the Abe administration as taking antagonistic policy toward the North. A North Korean source described Prime Minister Fukuda as less repulsive than Abe.

North Korea apparently attempted to soften Japan's stance toward the abduction issue by demonstrating its willingness to hold a dialogue with Japan days after the establishment of the Fukuda administration. The North also seems to intend to watch for the time being Japan's response to Kim's statement and to see if there is any change in Japan's policy toward its sanctions and the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryon).

9) Coordination underway for President Hu's Japan visit next spring: Chinese premier asks Prime Minister Fukuda to visit China

NIKKEI (Page 1) (Full)  
September 28, 2007

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao yesterday met with former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, who is now visiting Beijing, at the Great Hall of the People. Concerning President Hu Jintao's (General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party) visit to Japan, Mori indicated a plan to coordinate views with the possibility of setting a schedule for next spring, saying, "It may be good if he visits Japan in spring, for instance, the season of cherry blossoms."

Mori conveyed a message from Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, which went, "I would like to visit China as soon as possible."

Premier Wen also met with members of a delegation from the Japan-China Economic Association, including Fujio Mitarai, chairman

TOKYO 00004542 007 OF 013

of the Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren) and chairman of Canon. Wen during the meeting indicated his intention to promote active investment in the northeastern region of the country by Japanese companies and to press ahead with the consolidation of laws related to bilateral economic cooperation.

This would be the first visit to Japan by a Chinese president since Jiang Zemin's visit in 1998.

10) Eleven top envoys to Japan, including US ambassador, issue statement offering appreciation to MSDF for refueling operations in Indian Ocean

SANKEI (Page 1) (Slightly abridged)  
September 28, 2007

Ambassadors to Japan from eleven countries including US Ambassador Schieffer which are dispatching troops under Operation Enduring Freedom to Afghanistan and the Indian Ocean, yesterday met at the official residence of the Pakistani ambassador in Shibuya, Tokyo. They expressed appreciation for the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling operations in the Indian Ocean and issued a statement seeking continuation of such services.

It is unprecedented that such a large number of ambassadors to Japan jointly expressed their wishes toward Japan. Their aim is to offer indirect assistance to the government and the ruling camp, which are engaged in Diet deliberations in order to extend the operations, by demonstrating the significance of the refueling services to domestic forces opposing the effort.

Participants included ambassadors from the US, Britain, Germany, France, Australia, Italy, Canada, Greece, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. They appeared in front of the official residence after discussing the matter for about 30 minutes. Pakistani Ambassador Kamran Niaz read out the statement on behalf of the participants. Japan is now looking into the possibility of instead of extending the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law, which expires on Nov. 1, introducing a new bill because the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) and other opposition parties are strongly against an extension. The government and the ruling camp intend to find a breakthrough in the issue through talks with the DPJ.

Following the joint statement, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda yesterday told reporters, "I think the statement is an expression of their expectations of Japan. I am sure there is a deep understanding of the operations because they are intended to prevent terrorist activities from spreading." He stressed his determination to make further efforts to continue the MSDF's activities.

11) Government to compile outline for new legislation next week to extend MSDF refueling mission

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)  
September 28, 2007

The government and the ruling parties decided yesterday to compile an outline possibly next week for new legislation to extend the Maritime Self-Defense Force's (MSDF) refueling operation in the Indian Ocean. They plan to reveal the outline in a meeting of the House of Representatives Budget Committee in early October. If the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) makes proposals on its contents,

TOKYO 00004542 008 OF 013

they will reflect the proposals in drawing up a bill and then submit it to the Diet.

On the issue of whether to extend the MSDF mission, the DPJ has indicated it would not hold preliminary talks with the government and the ruling camp. In a bid to break the impasse, the government will present an outline for a new law and reflect DPJ proposals in a bill.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura said in a NHK program last night:

"We will be able to compile an outline sometime next week. Upon presenting the outline, we would like to start discussion (with the DPJ). ... But if the DPJ comes up with proposals during the discussion, it will be possible to make changes because it is an outline. Reflecting the proposals, we will work out a bill and submit it to the Diet."

The Liberal Democratic Party's four executive members, including Secretary General Bunmei Ibuki, also indicated similar views in

SIPDIS  
interviews with the Asahi Shimbun and other press companies yesterday. Ibuki said: "When the Lower House Budget Committee is set in motion, we will present an outline (for new legislation) and call (on the DPJ) for discussion."

Discussion on a second revision of the Political Funds Control Law is underway in the ruling camp, focusing on a proposal under which political funds groups would be required to attach receipts for expenditures of more than one yen and an independent third party would judge whether the receipts should be disclosed or not. On this proposal, Ibuki indicated that the government would draft a bill and discuss the bill with the DPJ. Policy Research Council Chairman Sadakazu Tanigaki also remarked: "The government also should do

properly what the private sector has done."

Regarding the issue of whether to reinstate former Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Takeo Hiranuma, one of the "postal rebels," in the party, Ibuki implied his severe view about his unconditional reinstatement, saying: "He naturally should properly take the required steps as we did when we were officially backed by the party."

On the proposed drastic reform of the law to help disabled people become independent, in which those who use welfare service are required to pay 10 PERCENT of the bill, Tanigaki indicated a cautious stance, saying: "It has been decided that the law is reviewed every three years, so it does not mean that the framework of the system will be abruptly changed."

12) Defense minister expresses eagerness to enact new law in current Diet session to extend MSDF refuel mission

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)  
September 28, 2007

Appearing on a TV program yesterday, Defense Minister Ishiba renewed his eagerness to enact a new law in the current Diet session to extend the Maritime Self-Defense Force's (MSDF) refueling mission in the Indian Ocean. He said: "Personally I am very eager to have the bill passed in the ongoing extraordinary Diet session by all means."

TOKYO 00004542 009 OF 013

13) Defense Ministry investigating past records of MSDF refueling operations in Indian Ocean

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)  
September 28, 2007

Referring to allegations that a Maritime Self-Defense Force ship deployed to the Indian Ocean based on the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law may have refueled to US aircraft engaging in the Iraq war, Vice Defense Minister Kohei Masuda revealed at a press conference yesterday that the Defense Ministry is now investigating all past records of the MSDF refueling operations to see whether any Japanese fuel was used for purposes other than for the antiterrorism operations in and around Afghanistan. The Self-Defense Forces (SDF) supplied fuel 777 times to vessels from 11 countries from December 2001 through the end of August 2007. The Defense Ministry intends to complete its investigation before questioning sessions by party representatives start at the current extraordinary Diet session.

14) Gov't desperate to dispel suspicions over MSDF fuel supply

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
September 28, 2007

The Diet will now reopen its halted extraordinary session and focus on the issue of continuing the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling activities in the Indian Ocean beyond the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law's Nov. 1 expiry. Meanwhile, US and other foreign naval vessels are suspected of having used their MSDF-supplied fuel for operations in Iraq or other purposes. The MSDF has so far carried out nearly 800 fuel supplies for them. In this regard, Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba, appearing on a commercial TV show yesterday, indicated that he would look into the facts about all of those MSDF fuel supplies to see if the MSDF-supplied fuel was used for other purposes. However, the Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto) and other opposition parties will pursue the government and ruling parties in the Diet. The government and ruling parties, now aiming to create a new law as an alternative for the current time-limited antiterror law, are concerned about the new source of trouble.

The Antiterrorism Special Measures Law limits its purpose to Japan's rear-echelon support for operations in Afghanistan, and so does the newly planned legislation. If it becomes clear that the MSDF-supplied fuel was used for the Iraq war, that is against the



law's purpose. If that is the case, the government and ruling parties would be held up in Diet deliberations and would sustain a serious blow. The government and ruling parties are therefore desperate to dispel the suspicions.

The biggest matter of concern to the government and ruling parties over the suspicions is a claim from Peace Depot, a nonprofit organization in Japan. On Feb. 25, 2003, an MSDF fuel ship provided a US supply ship with fuel amounting to about 800,000 gallons (approx. 3,000 kiloliters). According to Peace Depot, the US supply ship refueled the Kitty Hawk, a US aircraft carrier, when they were in the Indian Ocean for activities to watch Iraq.

In 2003, the then chief cabinet secretary, Yasuo Fukuda, now the prime minister, and other government officials explained that the MSDF refueled the US supply ship with only 200,000 gallons, or an aircraft carrier's fuel consumption for one day. Fukuda stated at

TOKYO 00004542 010 OF 013

that time, "It's actually inconceivable that the fuel is used for Iraq attacks." With this, the government denied the suspected use of fuel for operations in Iraq. However, Peace Depot noted the fuel supply, based on the Kitty Hawk's log and other sources. The Defense Ministry later confirmed that the Kitty Hawk had been refueled with about 800,000 gallons.

The government has so far checked the operational areas of foreign naval vessels before the MSDF's fuel supply for them. The government, in its written reply dated Sept. 18, stated that the government is not in a position to be aware of details about how the MSDF-supplied fuel is used. However, the government later had to account for Peace Depot's fact-finding, with a senior Defense Ministry official saying: "It was before the Iraq war. Also, and the US Navy's operational areas were not separated so strictly like now."

On Sept. 23, Fukuda also appeared on a commercial TV show before he came into office as prime minister. Fukuda said, "We thought they were operating in the Indian Ocean, but they might have been told to go to Iraq."

However, there is no guarantee that the countries concerned will unveil details about their military operations. In this connection, the government noted security reasons. "We can't say how far it's possible to disclose," Administrative Vice Defense Minister Kohei Masuda said. On Sept. 26, New Komeito, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's coalition partner, held a meeting of its foreign affairs and security panel. In this meeting as well, an official from the Defense Ministry only said the Japanese government has been inquiring of the US government. One of New Komeito's lawmakers there hurled at the official, saying, "Do you think such an explanation is good enough to get through the Diet committee?"

Under such circumstances, the Defense Ministry is going to look into the facts about all of those MSDF fuel supplies. One New Komeito executive voiced concern: "If the opposition parties demand data files, the Diet will stop its deliberations. This looks like the issue of the government's pension record-keeping flaws."

The DPJ and other opposition parties are poised to pursue and drive the government and the ruling coalition into a tight corner while using the right to conduct investigations in relation to government. "The government and the ruling parties and the prime minister lied," a DPJ executive said. In a recent opinion poll, those in favor of continuing the MSDF's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean outnumbered those against it. The DPJ is also aiming to change such a trend in public opinion.

The DPJ yesterday held a meeting of its foreign and defense affairs panel for hearings with officials from the Defense Ministry and the Foreign Ministry about the MSDF's refueling activities in the Indian Ocean. In the end, however, the Defense Ministry did not answer any questions at all about when, how often, and how much the MSDF refueled foreign naval vessels.

Akihisa Nagashima, a DPJ lawmaker seated in the House of

Representatives, noted that the US military operates in various areas but US vessels move from area to area. "These ships are not distinguished in different colors for Operation Enduring Freedom (subject to the MSDF's refueling services)," Nagashima said. "Like the Japanese government," he added, "they should not be able to say

TOKYO 00004542 011 OF 013

they have never refueled any of their ships participating in operations other than the Afghan campaign." With this, Nagashima pursued the government's accountability.

DPJ Vice President Naito Kan commented: "If the government had intentionally allowed such a thing (to refuel foreign vessels for other purposes), that means the government has deceived the Diet and the public and such activities have gone out of civilian control. We will request complete information disclosure." In addition, Kan also noted that the US Navy's 5th Fleet website describes the use of MSDF-supplied fuel for other purposes.

15) Japan during bilateral foreign ministerial asks US to disclose information on use of fuel it supplied: Defense Ministry starts investigating use of fuel

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Full)  
September 28, 2007

Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura yesterday met with US Secretary of State Rice at the US Department of State. Komura explained that Japan is doing its utmost for the continuation of the refueling operation in the Indian Ocean by the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF). He called on the US to disclose locations of the operations of US vessels that received fuel from MSDF vessels, noting, "It is very difficult to persuade the opposition camp and the public without information."

Regarding whether to remove North Korea from the US list of state sponsors of terrorism, Komura pointed out, "If the nation is removed from the list before the abduction issue is settled, we would lose leverage in promoting Japan-North Korea relations." Rice replied, "We understand Japan's position. We will take it into consideration."

The Defense Ministry yesterday announced that they launched an investigation to find out activities in which fuel provided by MSDF vessels in the Indian Ocean was used. The opposition camp and civic groups have claimed that fuel provided by Japan was used for the Iraq war contrary to the objective of the law. The Defense Ministry intends to dispel this allegation regarding all refueling cases.

According to the ministry, the MSDF provided approximately 480,000 kiloliters to US and British vessels through August 30. Vice Defense Minister Kohei Masuda explained, "We are now confirming facts and checking every single case. We will confirm facts as much as we can, though there is a military restriction."

Masuda said that the ministry would inquire of fuel recipient countries, according to need, assuming cases like an MSDF vessel refueled a US supply vessel, and the US supply vessel refueled US carrier vessels.

Appearing on a TV-Asahi program, Defense Minister Ishiba said the same day, "It will not do just to say that there will be no problem, since Japan has signed an exchange of notes with the US. We will obtain all data so that we can rebut the criticism properly." He said that the investigation would end by around Oct. 9.

16) Hospitalized former Prime Minister Abe temporarily returns home

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)

TOKYO 00004542 012 OF 013

September 28, 2007

Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who has been in Keio University

Hospital since Sept. 13, was allowed to return temporarily to his private residence in Tomigaya, Tokyo. It was first time for Abe to spend the night away from the hospital. According to persons close to Abe, doctors judged that there was a possibility that Abe would get better at home more quickly than at the hospital since his appetite has now increased. Abe will decide on when to leave the hospital after hearing doctors' diagnosis.

17) Poll: 74 PERCENT urge Diet dissolution within 1 year

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Abridged)  
September 28, 2007

The Mainichi Shimbun conducted a nationwide public opinion survey on Sept. 25-26. In the survey, respondents were asked if they thought Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda should dissolve the House of Representatives for a general election. In response to this question, a total of 74 PERCENT answered that the Diet should be dissolved within one year, with only 20 PERCENT saying there is no need to dissolve the Diet. The next general election for the House of Representatives is expected to be an election for the public choice of government. The survey shows that the general public wants an early election for the Diet's lower chamber.

Respondents were also asked which political party they would like to see win in the next general election for the House of Representatives. To this question, 45 PERCENT chose the leading opposition Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto), with 41 PERCENT picking the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and 9 PERCENT opting for other political parties.

18) Prime Minister Fukuda to deliver policy speech on Oct. 1

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Excerpts)  
September 28, 2007

The House of Representatives Rules and Administration Committee decided yesterday that Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda will deliver his policy address on Oct. 1 and hold interpellations by party representatives on Oct. 3-4.

The House of Councillors is also set to decide today on Prime Minister Fukuda's policy speech for Oct. 1 and representative interpellations for Oct. 4-5. The timetable will be determined to resume the extraordinary Diet session, which has been stalled since former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's announcement of his resignation.

19) DPJ's strategy of submitting a storm of own bills to Upper House

ASAHI (Page 4) (Excerpts)  
September 28, 2007

The main opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) has stepped up its efforts to submit more of its own bills to the current session of the Diet, switching from the initial plan to reduce the number of bills to be submitted. The DPJ executive in the House of Councillors caucus shifted from a cautious stance with one word from President Ichiro Ozawa. The LDP Upper House leadership had said that those

TOKYO 00004542 013 OF 013

answering questions would need sufficient time for their preparations. Ozawa's aim is to counter the government of Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, who has advocated a dialogue-oriented policy, through debate at the Diet by submitting a storm of its own bills from pledges included in its manifesto for the July Upper House election.

The DPJ submitted yesterday to the Upper House a bill revising the Natural Disaster Victims Relief Law. The measure is designed to allow victims to use relief funds also for housing construction, purchasing and repairing costs, raising the upper limit on the relief funds from 3 million yen (including 1 million yen for livelihood support) to 5 million yen, offering funds retroactively to January this year.

The largest opposition party decided on Sept. 27 to submit to the Upper House a bill revising the law to support the disabled persons' self-reliance on Sept. 28 and an anti-hepatitis measures law next week. Deputy President Naoto Kan revealed at a press conference on the 27th that the DPJ would present to the current session a pension system reform bill.

The DPJ has fallen in step with Ozawa's order. Ozawa called his aide on the morning of Sept. 26, asking, "How are bills going on?" His aide replied, "Nothing is going on." Attending a meeting that day of the Next Cabinet, Ozawa urged each lawmaker to submit a list of bills to him, saying, "If you submit no bills to the Diet, the DPJ's reputation will be damaged."

20) Former US Ambassador to Japan Mondale meets with DPJ head Ozawa

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)  
September 28, 2007

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Ichiro Ozawa met yesterday at party headquarters with former US Vice President Walter Mondale, who is in Japan to give a speech. He spoke of the Japan-US relationship with such comments as, "We must become an ally that American can rely on and that does not leave everything to the US to handle." Ozawa, who is opposed to the extension of Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) continuing refueling activities in the Indian Ocean, seemed to aim at making an appeal through an American connection of his party's stance of placing importance on the US relationship. Mondale has had close relations with Ozawa since the time he was ambassador to Japan from 1993-95. The meeting was held at Mondale's wish.

SCHIEFFER